

McRae Archival Collection Access Policy
South Carolina Confederate Relic Room & Military Museum
Effective December 1, 2007

About the Collection

The McRae Archival Collections consists of the business and family papers of Colin J. McRae. McRae served as the Confederacy's chief financial agent in Europe from the fall of 1863 through the end of the Civil War. The papers contain over 2500 documents of various types from the 1830s – 1870s. About 1000 documents pertain to the Civil War. Most of the Civil War-related documents are invoices, financial papers, and letters McRae used during his audit of Caleb Huse (Confederate purchasing agent in Europe before McRae). Other papers deal with McRae's actions as purchasing agent and his work to centralize Confederate purchasing overseas between 1863 and 1865. The collection includes a few postwar documents involving the Federal investigation of McRae and his move to Belize, British Honduras. Major content includes invoices and receipts for weapons, equipment and supplies purchased for the Confederate army and navy, as well as documents dealing with cotton bonds and the blockade. Other papers deal with his family and personal business matters in Mississippi and Alabama. These family papers contain receipts, letters, account and inventory statements, deeds, promissory notes, checks, bills, legal documents, and personal notes.

Access Policy

The collection is currently being processed by the Curator of History under the direction of the Chief Curator of Collections and Exhibitions. The SC Confederate Relic Room & Military Museum is accredited by the American Association of Museums. The McRae Collection represents a very rare archive and the museum must take all precautions regarding the collection's handling and arrangement. The family papers will be closed through January 31, 2009 because they are currently being processed according to standards developed by the American Association of Museums and Society of American Archivists. It is important the materials remain undisturbed while they are being professionally arranged and described. Disturbances and the movement of records during this process could result in disorder of the collection and a longer processing period, thus delaying reasonable access for a longer time.

Curator of History will make the collection available for researchers according to the museum's collections archival access policy. These conditions are to protect and insure the continued availability of the archival materials.

1. The Curator of History may limit the use and handling of extremely fragile or unusually valuable materials. If practical, suitable reproductions are made available for the use of all researchers.
2. The archival materials must be viewed within the area designated by the Curator of History. Pencils and laptops may be used. Ink pens, markers, or non-erasable writing devices are not permitted near archival collections.
3. The Curator of History may refuse access to an individual researcher who has demonstrated carelessness or deliberate destructiveness as to endanger the safety of the material.

4. Required Credit Line: Courtesy South Carolina Confederate Relic Room & Military Museum, Columbia, SC.
5. Photocopies may be purchased according to the fee schedule and are to be used for private study and research purposes only. Digital copies of the McRae Collection are only allowed for pre-approved publication requests and one time use fees apply. Reproduction/use fees will not be waived for the McRae Collection.
6. The researcher and his/her publisher have sole responsibility for securing permission to publish from unpublished materials in the museum's collections. Permission must be obtained to reproduce and or publish images of any object or document from the collections of the South Carolina Confederate Relic Room & Military Museum. Please ask Curator of History for "Permission to Publish" form. There will be a reasonable and modest fee charged for duplications. Commercial ventures will be charged according to the museum's fee schedule. Ask Curator of History for current fee schedule.

Schedule for McRae Archival Collection Processing:

June 2008 – Business papers open for research according to museum's collections and archival access policy.

June 1, 2008-January 31, 2009 – complete inventory of **family papers**, processing, including series development, re-housing and creation of finding aid.